AS TOUCHING THE MINISTRY OF CHILDREN

"Raising,guiding,and inspiring the next generation"

PAUL SANDI

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgment

Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

THE VALUE OF CHILDREN

- ✓ **God's Heart for children**
- ✓ **Why children matter in society and the church**
- ✓ **Understanding a child's world (spiritual,emotional,and mental needs)**

CHAPTER TWO

THE CALL TO CARE

- ✓ **Parents as first ministers**
- ✓ **The role of teachers,pastors,and the community**
- ✓ **Developing a heart for children ministry**

CHAPTER THREE
PRACTICAL MINISTRY

- ✓ **Teaching children effectively**
- ✓ **Helping children build strong faith and character**
- ✓ **Handling challenges (disobedience,trauma,and other)**

CHAPTER FOUR

BUILDING THE FUTURE

- ✓ **Raising a generation of leaders**
- ✓ **Creating a culture that values children**
- ✓ **Sustaining the ministry of children**

Conclusion

The future belongs to the children

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All thanks and appreciation to God almighty for making this work a success.

A special thanks to my parents,without whose support and guidance I wouldn't have done this.

To all my friends and well wisher who believes in me and has been providing words of succour through times of turbulence and joy.

May God bless you all.

Introduction

Children are the most precious gift of God to humanity.Yet in many communities,they are most neglected,misunderstood and overlooked,while adults pursue their dreams and build their future,children usually remain in the background,watching,espying and learning silently.

But God almighty looks at children differently.Jesus once said "let the little children come to me,and do not hinder them,for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"(Matthew 19:14).It sounds simple yet a powerful statement that decipher the heart of God.Children are not just leaders of tomorrow but partner's in today's development.

I wrote this book by the inspiration of God Almighty to stir a fresh passion for the ministry of children.It is for

parents,teachers,pastors,community leaders and everyone who believes that investing in children is investing in the future.It is also for young readers who wish to understand how unique they are in God's agenda.

In this book,you will find out why why children matter deeply to God,how to nuture them spiritually and emotionally,and how we can together build a culture that values and empowers the young.You will also find practical stories,and scriptures that you will use to touch the lives of children in your family,community,school,church and the society at large.

The ministry of children is not optional.it is a God giving mandate.As you read through this book,may your heart be aroused to act and your hands be empoweredto make a difference in the life of every child God puts into your care.

CHAPTER ONE

THE VALUE OF CHILDREN

Psalms 127:3-5 "Lo,children are a heritage of the lord:and the fruit of the womb is his reward·

4·As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man;so are children of the youth·

5-Happy is the man that hath is quiver full of them:they shall not be ashamed,but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate''

The worth of children can't be over-emphasized.From the scripture above we can conclude that children are so important in both God's agenda and man's affair.Nobody should wish to be childless in this our dispensation.There is an arguement that says a man's worth is not determined by the number of children he has,eg Nelson Madela was great all by himself not as a result of his children and

to some extent many of us don't know his children.But the point is that Nelson mandela himself was once a child who grew up as an ambassador of his father.Because of him we now know his father's name.If you are great today,glory to God but mind you, that is beacause your parents accepted and executed the devine mandate of reproduction.

GOD'S HEART FOR CHILDREN

Children occupy a special place in God's Heart.From the Genesis of creation,God demonstrated His desire for generations to be fruitful,multiply and carry His image across the earth.When we look at children,we are not just seeing small mortals,we are looking at the future of families,churches,communities and the world as a whole.

In the old testament,we see examples of how God worked mightily through children.Samuel for example,as a boy

could hear the voice of God in the temple when Eli the priest could not detect it.Moses was a vulnerable baby in a basket,yet God protected him and raised him up as a great deliverer.Josiah became king at only eight years old,and he led a national revival to turned the nation back to God.These stories tells us that children are never too small to be used by God.

The new testament also tells us how Jesus highly valued children.When parents brought their little ones to Him for blessings,the desciples tried to stop them;but Jesus rebuked them and said "let the little children come to me,and do not forbid them,for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"(Matthew 19:14).In another moment,He put a child inthe mist of his desciples and said "unless you change and become like little children,you will never enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew

18:3).To Jesus,children are not just the future-they are part of the kingdom today.

Why do children matter so much to God?one reason is their innocence and purity.Unlike adults who are often hardened by life,children believe easily.Their hearts are tender,their faith is simple,and their trust is genuine.

When a child prays,heaven is moved.That is why the enemy fights so hard to corrupt children easily in life-through negative influences,harmful media practices and destructive environments.

The Bible also teaches that children are a heritage and a blessing (psalms 127:3-5).They are not burdens but a blessing.They are not interuptions to life but life itself.Every child is a gift and with that gift comes responsibility.Parents are called to nuture,guide and train their children in the ways of God.Churches are also called to desciple them,and

communities to protect and empower them.

But what happens when children are neglected? The results are tragic.A generation without guidance easily drifts to violence,immorality and hopelessness.We see this in many societies today;children are left on the streets,trapped in poverty or lost to harmful habits. In Hosea 4:6 warns us "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge".When children are not taught, they perish,when they are not guided they lose direction.

This is why the ministry of children is not optional-it is monumental.Each of us has a role to play.Wheather you are a parent,pastor,teacher or simply a neighbor,you are a minister to the children around you.They watch your actions,they learn from your words,and they are shaped by your examples.

As you reflect on this,ask your self;how do i see the children around me? Do i see them as a noise or disturbance or as a treasure and gift from God? Do i invest in their growth or do i ignore them until they grow up?

The way you answer this questions will determine not only the future of your family,and church but also the destiny of the nation.For in the heart of every child is the seed of tomorrow.

WHY CHILDREN MATTER IN SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH?

Children are more than members of a family;they are the foundation of every community and nation.A society that values its children secure its future,while a society that neglect its children prepares for its downfall.The way we treat children today,will determine the kind of leaders,worker,and citizens we will have tomorrow.

1.Children as the future of society

Every great leader,teacher,doctor,engineer and pastor was once a child.No president or king ever appeared as an adult;all began as children who needed guidance,education,and love.

A child left uneducated today,may become an unproductive adult tomorrow.For example,I know of a man whose passion is to preach the word of God,but because he is uneducated,he is limited.I do not dispute the fact that the holy spirit does not use uneducated men.It happens in Bible days and can happen again today,but I personally believe that education is an added advantage.

2.Children in the family

The family is the first school for the child.The family should nuture its children to become meaningful citizens in society.Children are ambassadors of their

families and so must families nuture their children to reflect acceptable values in society.

3.children in the church

The church,just like the society and families need children.Those children today in children's department are going to take the batton tomorrow to continue the message of the church,without whom the church will have no future.Therefore there is a need for the church to be very resilent in teaching the children and modeling strong faith based characters.

4.children as an agent of change

No child is too small to institute a change.God can use a child to restore peace and tranquility in a broken home.Imagine the boy Josiah who became king at eight,and how he led a national revival that led the nation back to God.

UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S WORLD

Many a time parents and elders tend to impose on children their own will forgeting to note that children too have will on their own.If we must effectively minister to children,we should understand their point of intrest or need whichI called a child's world.Jesus ministered to many people in the bibe by meeting them at their point of need and by so doing ,he was able to effectively and effeciently achieve his goal on earth.So must parents and elders understand the needs of children for effective and effecient mentorship.I look at three monumental aspects of a child's world,which every parent should understand.

1.Emotional needs

Every child on earth deserves encouragement and the emotional support it takes to thrive.Parents should not discourage children by using

derogatory statements.For every single word spoken by man has the efficacy to build or destroy another man.Men are made by words and men are destroyed by words.We go to schools,churches ,universities and other social institutions to hear certain people say certain words,and amazingly enough to notice that we are not different from the words we have been hearing.A mathematician is made a mathematician by words,so is a linguist and any other proffesional you know.We are all a product of words,and so speak encouraging words to a child and see what that child will become.

2.Physical needs

A child's physical needs are to be effectively meet inoder for that child to be intrested in any mentorship or discipleship.Provide food,clothing,shelter,medication,security and safety.You don't expect a hungry child

to be a happy child,nor do you expect a sad child child to be intrested in learning anything.Jesus feed the multitude before He could preach the gospel unto them.The Bible recorded that 5000 men,aside women and children.Inoder word the children were too plenty and hungry to the point some were crying noisely as a result of hunger.Jesus could not preach his sermon to such a congregation at such a time,he had to feed them.When the children had eating to stupor,they stop crying and making noise,then he could now preach.Prioritize their welfare eg; food,medication,shelter,clothing,educatio n etc.

3.Spiritual needs

The prayer of a child is potent,because of their absolute faith.Imagine a poor child telling his/her parent to buy him/her a car when what to eat at home is a PhD thesis to accomplish.That is why God said we all

should be like children because of their absolute faith.God hears their prayers so easily,therefore give them the opportunity to pray,preach the word of God-for out of suckling babies will proceed wisdom.if you show them the way today,they can man the stage tomorrow.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CALL TO CARE

"Train up a child in the way he should go;and when he is old,he will not depart from it''(Proverb 22:6)

Many of us think that providing food,clothing and shelter for a child is all the care that there be,there is something beyond that.We need to understand that caring for a child is a big task which every parent should prioritize.The reason why many children have gone astray today is as a result of neglengence from the side of care givers.If we wish for a better society tomorrow we should work on the upbringingof children today.

The parent as the child's first minister

Before a child interact with the outside world,he/she passes through the tutilage of the parents.The parents are therefore

the first minister or servant to the child,they learn many things at home before learning anything from the outside world.The child first learn at home how to respect and honor eleders before learning from the outside world.Many parents sponsor their children in the university of pride,arrogance,stupidity and foolishness by not rebuking them at the instance of misbehaviour.Some parents laughs at certain grave misconduct from children that should be frowned at and corrected at the instance.I was told of a case that happened during the Sierre Leone 11 years civil war.According to the story,there was this boy named MK whose mother was a single parent but was well to do at that time.They migrated from Sierra Leone to Guinea a neighboring country,at the refugee camp, it was said that anytime the young man(boy) became angry due to some unjustifiable reasons,he will burned his mother's pants and bras in the open

inorder to pacify his anger.Any wonder then the Bible says that a foolish son is a disease to his mother ?.instead of the boy's mother to get rid of the foolishness imediately by instituting some disciplinary measures,she will laugh it over and say "MK you know this habit of yours is not a thing to pronounced nor to behold? We are in a refugee camp,to get money is like a visit to planet mars and here you are burning all my pants and bras;I will be naked in the recent future"Imagine this kind of soft statement without weight and depth.The boy always takes it for granted and keep doing this profane thing.After some 20 years the war ended,on returning to Sierra Leone the boy resorted to holiganism and was shoot to death by a security guard whiles on a night robbery mission.Give your child all the civil previlleges that there be but never you forget to instill discipline in them.

How must a parent minister to a child?

- Provide them food,clothing and shelter
- Let them have access to good medication
- Let them be educated
- Some time deprive them of some good thing that will harm them at the moment.
- Do not allow your child to be your instructor,you take the lead.
- Children will prefer play and entertainment all the time,don't heed to that as a good parent.

The role of teachers,pastors and the community

TEACHERS

Teachers are second parents in shaping children's lives.Their role is to provide knowledge,discipline,encouragement and moral guidance.Because Daniel and the

other three Hebrew boys were educated and trained,that prepared them to stand for God in Babylon.Teachers must go beyond academics and instill values of discipline,respect and wisdom.

- Be patient with their weaknesses
- Correct them strongly but in love
- Encourage them to see education as a route to their destiny

PASTORS

The role of the pastor is to teach the word of God,direct them in prayer,and monitor their spiritual growth.Children must be spiritually feed early (John 21:15),Jesus said to peter,feed my lambs.

- Organise children's ministry in the church
- Teach them stories from the bible and songs based on their age.
- Monitor teenagers with wisdom so they do not fall into peer pressure.

COMMUNITIES

It takes a village to raise a child.That is a common saying among Africans.The community should provide safety,moral example and community parenting.If the society is corrupt,children will swallow corruption,if it is goodly,children will swallow goodliness.

- Neighbors and elders should be good models
- Protect them from abuse
- Protect them from exploitation
- Don't send them to buy cigarettes,alcohol and other hamful drugs.They might think it's normal.

DEVELOPING A HEART FOR CHILDREN MINISTRY

Because many children are vulnerable to abuse,neglect and other vices,we all should develop a heart to minister unto

them.Also note that a child that is taught the word of God today will carry it for life.

Qualities of a good child minister

- Because children learn slowly and repeat mistakes,you need to be calm;that is love and patience.
- Your goal is not to seek glory nor praise from men but to transform lives;that is humility
- Use songs,stories,drama and drawings to make the gospel a life;that is creativity.
- Consistecy is key in evrything we do.

How to develop a heart for children's ministry ?

- Ask God to give you compassion for children
- Read books on child's psychology.It will help you understand children better.

- Listen to their views and give them the due respect they desreve
- Work cohesively with parents,pators,and other leaders in the society.

As you end this chapter,ask yourself these few questions:

1. Whose duty is it to instill cultural value in children?
2. Is marginalising children the best way to care for them? If not,why do you say so?
3. Are people intrested in community parenting today?
4. What are the wrongs if we neglect children's spiritual growth?

CHAPTER THREE

PRACTICAL MINISTRY

Teaching children is both a joy and a responsibility.A child's heart is like a fresh soil-whatever seed is planted will grow,whether good or bad.That is why anybody that is called into children's ministry must teach with patience,love,and creativity.

Teaching children effectively

Children do not learn best when we only lecture them.They learn when lessons are tied to their daily lives.For example,when teaching about kindness,the story of the good samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) becomes powerful if we compare it to situations in the village,at school or in play ground.A child who remembers sharing food with a friend will connect quickly with the lesson.

Also,children learn differently.Some enjoy listening,others prefer drawing or

acting,while some only understand when they try something with their own hands.That is why using songs,memory verses,short dramas and even simple drawings on the board can make the Bible come alive.I remember once teaching about Noah's ark by asking the children to draw their favourite animals-suddenly the story was no longer far away,it was infront of them.

Above all,children never forget how you make them feel.A child may forget the exact words of a memory verse,but they will not forget the teacher who smiled at them,encouraged them,and prayed with them.Jesus Himself valued children,and when we show patience and warmth,we reflect His love.

Helping children build strong faith and character

Children are not only learners;they are future leaders,mothers,fathers,and

citizens.If they grow up with strong faith and good character,the entire nation benefits.The Bible reminds us "train up a child in the way he should go;and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6)

Faith grows stronger when children see it in action.A child learns prayer not only from being told to pray,but by watching their parents or teachers pray sincerely.They learn honesty when parents keep their promises.They learn forgivenss when they see leaders saying "i'm sorry".These silent examples preach louder than any long sermon.

Character building also means celebrating small steps.If a child tells the truth,even when it cost them,that deserves encouragement.If a child shows respect to elders or works hard on a school task,those moments should be noticed.By

praising good behviour,we water the seed of godly character in them.

One simple way to nuture children in faith is to involve them in simple christian habits-reading a short verse from the Bible,praying in their own words,helping sweep the church,or visiting a sick neighbor with the ministry team.These small actions plant the idea that faith is not only for Sunday,but for daily life.

Handling challenges

Children's ministry is rewarding,but it comes with challenges.Some children come from broken homes,where love is missing.Others maybe restless,easily distracted,or even stubborn.At times,teachers themself may feel tired,under-resourced or unappreciated.

In these situations,patience and wisdom are key.A disruptive child may not be bad-sometimes they are simply looking for

attention they do not recieve at home.When such a child feels noticed ,and loved,their energy can often be redirected positively.I once had a boy who always disturb the class.Instaed of punishing him harshly,I ask him to help me lead the singing.To my suprise ,he became one of the most active participants.

Discipline is needed,but it must be gentle and fair.Harsh words or punishment can crush a child's spirit.Instead discipline should correct,not distroy.Setting clear boundries,using kind but firm words,and following through consistently helps feel safe and respected.

We,the teachers and leaders,also face our own struggles.Sometime we feel weak or think our efforts are not making a differnce.But Galatians 6:9 encourages us: "let us not be weary in well doing,for in due season we shall reap,if we faint

not.Ministry is partnership with God;we plant the seeds,but He brings the growth.

Children may be small,but their influence is great.To reach them is to reach generations.

CHAPTER FOUR

BUILDING THE FUTRE

Every child we teach toady has the potential to be a leader tomorrow.Leadership is not limited to holding positions;it is about influence,responsibility and service.The seeds we plant in children-truth,honesty,respect,and faith are the very qualities that shape graet leaders.

RAISING A GENERATION OF LEADERS

When Moses was a baby,it seemed impossible that he would one day stand before Pharoah.When David was tending sheep,no one would imagine he would become Isreal's greatest king.The truth is,children may look small now,but within them lies the destiny of nations.Our task is to nuture that destiny.

We raise leaders by giving children responsibilities,even small ones.Allowing

them to pray during devotion,read scripture aloud,or help oragnise a class teaches them to take ownership.A child who learns to lead in a small circle today may one day lead a community,a church,or even a nation.

As Paul told Timothy "Let no one despise your youth,but be an example to the believers" (Timothy 4:12).When we value children as contributors rather than passive listeners,we prepare a generation of confident,godly leaders.

CREATING A CULTURE THAT VALUES CHILDREN

Children thrive where thay are valued.Sadly,in many homes and communities,children are overlooked,silenced,or treated as burdens.But a church or community that values children invest in its future.

To create such a culture,we must begin with our attitude.Do we see children as distractions during worship,or as a full member of the body of christ? Jesus so valued children.

Valuing children means listening to them,respecting their opinions,and celebrating their growth.It also means protecting them-ensuring they are safe,cared for,and not exposed to harmful influences.In practical terms,churches and schools can set aside resources,time and space for children's programs,showing that their development is a priority and not an afterthought.

When children feel valued,they respond with love,trust,and a willigness to grow.A culture that value children is a culture that invest in its strongest foundation.

SUSTANING THE MINISTRY OF CHILDREN

Many children's ministry begins with passion,but sustaining them requires vision,commitment,and tean work.Ministry should not depend on one person's energy alone,it must be a shared responsibility of the church,the family,and the community.

Sustainability comes when children's ministry is integrated into the full life of the church,not treated as a side activity.

It means traning more teachers,encouraginging parentts to participate,and ensuring that resources are allocated consistently.

Another way to sustainability is to raise new leaders within the ministry itself.Older children and youths can be mentored to serve as helpers and role models for the younger ones.In this way,the ministry become self renewing-

each generation carrying the work forward.

Conclusion

The future of the church,the family,and the nation rests in the hands of today's children.If we guide them with love,empower them with truth,and surround them with a community that values them,we are building not only their lives but the destiny of generations to come.

Children may be young,but their dreams,prayers and potential are mighty.To invest in them is to invest in tomorrow.Truly,the future belongs to the children.

ABOUT THE AUT

The Journey of a bright mind

My name is Sahr Pius Paul Queenyinamadi Sandi,populary known as Paul Sandi.I was born on 15 December 1999 in kainkordu,a community in Soa Chiefdom,kono District,Sierra Leone.I come from a humble and hard working family led by Mr.Sahr Manga and Mrs.Finda Matilda Manga.I am the eldest of six children-Hannah,John,Rebecca,Matthew and Semeon,and growing up in a such a lively household taught me cooperation,patience,and determination.

My early education began at RC primary school Kainkordu,where I sat to my NPSE.I continued my academic journey at St Edward Manjama,where I sat to my BECE,and later at ISSK-Koidu,where iI successfully completed the WASSCE.These stages shape my discipline and passion for learning,especially in Mathematics and the sciences.

My drive for knowledge led me to pursue Bachelor of science in education Mathematics (Bsc.Ed-Mathematics) at Freetown Polytechnic-Jui,where I am a final year student with growing experience and strong ambition.Alongside my studies,I have deployed years of practical teaching experience,which has shape my identity as an educator.

Today,I serve as a Further Math teacher and a Vice Principal at Grace International Academy.Teaching is more than a job to me – it's a calling.I also enjoy reading,research,Mathematics and expanding my knowledge accross fields such as Physics,education and computer literacy.

My story is still being written,and every new day offers me another chance to grow,serve,and achieve.